Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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For Immediate Release: July 5, 2007
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WASHINGTON – Bureau of Indian Affairs Director W. Patrick Ragsdale today announced that he has appointed Vicki L. Forrest as the new deputy director for the BIA's Office of Trust Services. Forrest, an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, came to the BIA from the Interior Department's Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST).

"I am pleased Vicki Forrest has joined the BIA's management team as the Deputy Director for Trust Services," Ragdale said. "She is an able Federal Indian trust administrator who will bring strong oversight and accountability experience to her new position."

Forrest has a background in accounting and Indian trust management for both her tribe and OST. Prior to her current appointment, she had served since March of 2004 as the Regional Fiduciary Trust Administrator for OST's Eastern Oklahoma and Pacific regions. As such, she oversaw the regions' Fiduciary Trust Officers by providing administrative and programmatic guidance relating to Indian assets and monitoring the management of such assets to ensure their appropriate protection, accounting and disbursement.

"Working for the betterment of Indian people has been a tenet of my professional career," Forrest said. "I am grateful for the opportunity to lead the BIA's Office of Trust Services for the benefit of all tribal and individual Indian trust beneficiaries."

From October 2002 to March 2004, Forrest served as a Trust Reform Specialist within OST's offices in Albuquerque, N.M., where she provided technical assistance in support of a variety of Indian trust management improvement projects. She also applied her financial and accounting expertise to the successful resolution of problems related to implementing trust reforms and coordinated the accrual of resources and other support to accomplish the projects' goals.

In April 2002, Forrest joined OST as an accountant where she developed accounting policies and procedures for OST financial systems, ensured that such policies and procedures were in compliance with governmental policies, standards, applicable laws, regulations and precedent decisions, and served as a team member for reviewing, evaluating and developing new procedures for OST's Trust Funds Accounting System (TFAS).